

A 5
SERMON

PREACHED at the *694. 9. 6.*
COLLEGE CHURCH
IN
WORCESTER,
AT THE
ASSIZES
HELD THERE,
MARCH 28. 1725. being *Easter-day.*

K
By THOMAS SANDERS, M. A.
Rector of *Avon-Dasset*, and Chaplain to the Right
Honourable HARRY Earl of *Stamford*.

LONDON:

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MARCH 28. 1725. being Easter-day.

By THOMAS SANDERS, M.A.

Rector of St. Dunstons, and Chaplain to the Right
Honourable Harry Earl of Sandwich.

LONDON.

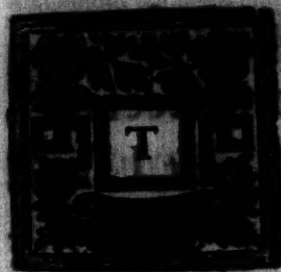
Printed for J. Roberts, near the Old-Bath, in
W. 1725. M.DCCXXV.

plain a manner) moved you to lay
your Commands on me to make

THOMAS HUNT, Esq;

**High-Sheriff of the County
of Worcester.**

Honoured SIR,



THE Resurrection and
a Judgment to come,
are undoubtedly the
most powerful Induce-
ments to promote Holiness of
Living. And surely the sincere
Regard you had to these solemn
Truths, together with your too
indulgent Approbation of my
treating of them, (tho' after so

A 2 plain

DEDICATION.

plain a manner) moved you to lay your Commands on me, to make this Discourse thus publick.

And tho', for this Instance of my Duty, I may be condemned for presuming to appear so openly in the Learned World ; yet it cannot altogether deprive me of the Hopes of doing some little good, tho' to the inferior Part of Mankind.

Nay, should I be so unsuccessful, as to fail even in this ; yet I shall have an Opportunity of shewing my Gratitude and Obedience, by here declaring how much I am,

Worthy S I R,

Your most Devoted and

most Obedient Humble Servant,

Thomas Sanders.

In the General Epistle of St. J U D E, the
14th and 15th Verses.

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of
his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all.

THE great Business of Re-
ligion, which now is at-
tended with such un-
accountable Difficulties,
could no longer prove a
Task so burthensome, if
Men would not act in perfect Opposition to
their own Reason. For who but such alone
would not easily be prevailed with to pur-
sue what tends so highly to promote their
eternal Advantage? And yet here Interest
it self, which in many things Men are too
much guided by, cannot court them to the
Practice of their Duty.
It is amazingly strange, to see so general
a Disregard openly shew'd to God and Re-
ligion,

ligion. To see Virtue so much despised, and those that practise it, so lightly esteemed; whilst Sin is committed by Consent, and the Encouragement of Wickedness abounds more and more.

But cannot all the Rewards of Piety persuade us to forsake Vice; nor the sad Terrors of the Lord incline us to live soberly and godly?

O! how long shall we continue thus deaf to those pressing Invitations, and be so unconcerned at all the Threatnings of the Gospel?

So many Learned and Pious Heads have been employ'd to form sufficient Rules for the Regulation of our Conduct, that it is almost impossible we should be Strangers to our Duty: And yet how few are so happy as to lead good Lives! Altho' they may be well assured of the fatal Consequences of

Sin, and made thoroughly sensible, that their
Continuance in Well-doing shall bring them
to Life everlasting. And that the Lord
will come to see which of these we have
chosen.

This is the mighty Business, that the Lord
will come upon at the last Day. And cer-
tainly, there is nothing upon Earth that so
much concerns us, as a strict Preparation
against his glorious Appearance.

Let me therefore humbly beg your At-
tention to this most important Truth; and
then surely it will make some Impression on
every Heart, that is not already past feel-
ing.

For

and made thoroughly sensible that their
 For that Man's Conscience must be fear-
 ed, who is not affected with the deepest Re-
 morse for past Sins, and moved with the
 strongest Desires to live better for the time
 to come; that so at last he may appear be-
 fore the Lord with Joy, and not with Grief;
 with Comfort and Pleasure, instead of Hor-
 ror and Amazement, when he comes so Roy-
 ally attended with ten thousands of his Saints,
 to execute judgment upon all.

This is the mighty Business that the Lord
 In discoursing on these Words, I shall
 shew, there is nothing upon Earth which
 much concerns us as a strict Preparation

First, Who this Lord is. And that the
 Time of his coming to Judgment was long
 since fixed by God Almighty.

**Secondly, Upon whom he shall then exe-
 cute Judgment.** And

**Thirdly, The Manner of his glorious Ap-
 pearance at the last great Day.**

First

91
First then, I am to shew who this LORD I. is.
LORD of Life. For he shall then lastly con-
vince all that are ungodly, of their wick-

Now the Holy Scriptures assure us, that it is JESUS CHRIST the Righteous; for to him the Father hath given Authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man; Joh. v. 27. And in the 22d Verse it is said, That the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. And our Creed teacheth us to believe, that JESUS CHRIST, who was crucified, dead and buried, who rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and there sits on God's right Hand; shall from thence come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

He, that once came after so contemptible a manner, shall then appear in Power and great Glory.

He, that once was exposed to such Necessities, as to want a Place where to lay
107 B his

his Head, shall then destroy that ungrateful World, that so basely entertained the LORD of Life. For he shall then sadly convince all that are ungodly, of those wicked Deeds which they have committed.

O then, what a mighty Difference will Sinners find betwixt CHRIST's first and second Coming? Once he came in Poverty, but then shall he appear in Glory. Once he was accompanied with poor indigent People, but then shall he be attended with dazzling Angels. Once he had a contemptible Crown of Thorns put upon his Head, but then shall he be adorned with Majesty and Honour.

And now, as to the Time when the LORD cometh to Judgment, it is already determined; for St. Paul tells us, that God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the World. But when this will come to pass, is to us altogether uncertain.

Acts xvii.
31.

For

For alas, how can we pretend to know
that which the very Angels themselves are
Strangers to? For of *that day and hour know-
eth no man, no not the Angels which are in
heaven*, as it is recorded in the xiiith Chap-
ter of St. Mark, and the 32d Verse. We
cannot tell how soon it may happen; we
know not the Hour when the LORD cometh;
but this we are sure of, that *the day of the
Lord will come as a thief in the night*, as
St. Peter tells us in his 2d Epistle, the 3d
Chapter, and the 10th Verse.

Therefore let us strictly prepare our selves
against the LORD's final Visitation.

And this leads me,

In the second place, to shew upon whom **II.**
he shall then execute Judgment.

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The

Deut. x.
17.

The Text tells us, *upon all*. For, at this mighty Tryal we must all appear, no one individual Person can possibly excuse himself. There no Bribes will be accepted: Would the Miser part with all his Wealth, what would it signify? Or of what Use then will be the great Man's Power? For the holy Scriptures tell us, that *God regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward*. Then shall the young in vain implore a farther Enjoyment of the Pleasures of this Life; nor shall the Infirmities of the Aged excuse their Absence from this dreadful Tribunal of the LORD.

Then the Farmer must not prove his untried Oxen, nor the rich Man once visit his new Purchase.

Nor is it we only that are now upon Earth, but likewise those that have already been, and they that shall be hereafter, that

must appear before the dreadful Bar at the general Resurrection.

What a mighty Influence must this have upon every Soul, that frequently and seriously meditates on it? This must surely put us all upon *working out our own salvation with fear and trembling*, and make us strive to become *a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Especially if we reflect on the amazing Difference that there will certainly be betwixt the Just and Unjust in a future State.

For then, at farthest, sad Experience shall too late convince the Ungodly of their evil Deeds; then shall they feel those dismal Torments, which they would not be forewarned of, either by the Scriptures, or their own Consciences.

Then

Then shall they experience the sad Terrors of the LORD, which they would not in this Life be persuaded to escape. Then shall they find the miserable Agonies of that wretched State to be as unavoidable, as they are great and lasting. Then shall they seek for Death, but shall not find it; they shall wish for Rocks to cover them, and Mountains to fall on them, but in vain; nothing can conceal them, they must appear.

Luke xix.
27.

For the LORD hath said, *Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither.*

O then, what Shame and Confusion of Face, what remediless Complaints and causeless Murmurs will be made by the wretched Objects of eternal Misery? Whilst the Souls of the Righteous shall, at the same

same time, be transported with Joys too great to be expressed.

For then the Happiness of the Godly shall be advanced to an astonishing Height; and the Punishment of Sinners shall be as great, as an infinite Duration of Torments can make it. Yea then, good Men shall receive their utmost Reward, and the Bad shall be made sensible of the Greatness of their Misery.

For tho' it is agreed by Men in general, that the Happiness or Misery of the Good or Bad will be very great, when the Souls of either first enter upon an immortal State; yet it is also agreed, that neither can arrive to a full and perfect State of Happiness or Misery, till the great and general Resurrection of the Just and Unjust.

May we therefore prepare, with all Diligence, to make our Calling and Election sure.

And

And that we may instantly set about the weighty Concerns of another World, I shall,

III. In the third and last place, proceed to shew the Manner of CHRIST's coming to Judgment.

But the Greatness of the Undertaking bids Defiance to my Endeavours. For this will be so splendid and glorious, that it will greatly exceed all that we can conceive or express. *Who can declare the noble acts of the Lord, saith David, or who can shew forth all his Praise?* Yet as far as the Scriptures reveal these Things, we may safely speak.

And if we seriously peruse the Records of the Gospel, we shall soon be convinced after what a glorious Manner the LORD shall then appear. For when he comes to Judgment, he shall be accompanied with all the dazzling Attendance that Heaven it self affords. *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven,*

heaven, with his mighty Angels, saith St. Paul, 1 Thess. i. 7. And, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints, saith the Text. And the Prophet Daniel tells us, that then a thousand thousand shall minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand shall stand before him, Dan. vii. 10. Or if Heaven have more, I believe it will pour out all its Store; it will, I presume, empty it self of all its glorious Inhabitants, when our Saviour comes to Judgment. For St. Matthew tells us, that then the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, Matth. xxv. 31.

How may the brightest Wits labour in vain to describe the Glory of that Day! We must leave the everlasting Praises of it to be set forth by immortal Tongues, because it exceeds all Imagination, and is what no mortal Eye hath ever yet seen, Ear heard, or Heart conceived.

C

We

We are informed in the first Chapter of the Acts, what surprizing Wonder seized the Men of Galilee, when our Saviour ascended into Heaven, and a Cloud received him out of their Sight.

Lost in Astonishment, they stood with their Eyes immoveably fixed, and continued gazing, till the Angels satisfied them with this joyful News, saying, *This same Jesus, which is now taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.* Which is enough to assure us, that, at our Saviour's second Coming, he shall appear in the midst of Clouds. Besides, St. John confirms us in this Belief; for in the 1st Chapter of the Revelations and the 7th Verse, it is said, *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.*

Having now proved, who this Lord is; that the Time of his coming to Judgment

was

was long since fixed by God Almighty,
and upon whom he shall execute Judgment
at the last Day; and having likewise shown
something of the Manner of his Coming,

I shall now humbly beg Leave to speak
a Word or two concerning our Saviour's
Resurrection, the chief Article of our Chri-
stian Faith; this being the great Festival of
our yearly Commemoration of it: And
then shall presume to add something con-
cerning a General Resurrection, which must
precede a General Judgment.

The undoubted Certainty of our Savi-
our's Resurrection gives very great Encou-
ragement to Piety and holy Living. And
Thanks to the Great God of Heaven, the
Scriptures afford Proof sufficient to render
this important Truth unquestionable. Nay,
nothing but wilful Obstinacy can want to
be convinced, that Christ rose from the
Dead, since it is so advantageously confirm-
ed by the best of Evidence.

The Women that went early in the Morning to visit his Sepulchre for their full Satisfaction, were introduced by an Angel to see the Place where the LORD lay; and at the same time assured by the heavenly Messenger, that *he was risen, as he said*, Matth. xxviii. 6. CHRIST shewed himself alive after his Passion, being seen of the Apostles forty days, and telling them the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts i. 3. Then the very Marks that he bore about him, were an Evidence of such irresistible Force, that it extorted from unbelieving Thomas this Confession, *My Lord, and my God*. In short, the many Doubts and Difficulties that this great Truth has waded through, have now placed it out of the Reach of all Suspicion.

And as the Resurrection of our Saviour is thus sufficiently attested by many infallible Proofs; so will the Resurrection of the

Just

Just and Unjust appear equally certain, when we consider the amazing Wonder is to be effected by God himself, with whom all things are possible.

For He, who by a bare *Fiat* spoke all Things into Being, surely can, whenever he pleases, summon the scattered Parts of the Body to meet together again, and make it entire, as before its Dissolution. For it is surely as much in his Power to raise the Dead, as at first to make Heaven and Earth out of Nothing. What if Worms have eaten some, or Fish devoured others? they shall all be restored: For God is as able to fit up the old Materials, as he was once to make new ones.

Now, at this mighty Resurrection, the Saints that are alive, shall not have the Preference of those that have been long dead: Nay, the LORD seems to be particularly mindful of those, who have been sleeping in the Dust, and have continued for Ages

in

in the Grave. For St. Paul tells us in *Thess.* iv. 15, 16. that the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remaining shall be caught up together with them in the clouds. So that not the living Saints, but those that long since died in the **L O R D**, shall have the Pre-eminence.

What startling Wonder would now possess our Thoughts, could we but imagine what a surprizing Sight the Day of the Resurrection must afford? The World is full of People now; but when all past Ages, even from the Beginning of it, shall at once make their Appearance, the Number must be astonishing. For each that adds to the mighty Throng, shall be amazed to see the vast Concourse.

Then where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear? And yet appear they must, for what can conceal them? Rocks cannot shelter them, for they shall be rent; nei-
ther

ther can they hide themselves in their Graves, for they shall be opened.

At this amazing Tryal, every one shall receive according to his Deeds. Then the Wicked shall experience God's Vengeance in never-ceasing Flames; and all the Holy Saints, together with the Glorious Company of Just Men made perfect, shall enter into their Master's Joy.

And then the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, as St. Peter tells us, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; the Earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, 2 Pet. iii. 10.

Then shall this World, with all the Glory of it, be totally consumed.

Where then will the Miser find his Heaps, or will the rich Man own his Possessions?

What

What shall I add more? Only my humble Intreaties, that you would be pleased to lay these things to heart, and be frequently meditating on that great and terrible Day, in which we must all appear at CHRIST'S dreadful Tribunal, to give a strict Account of all the Actions of this Life. And how quickly shall we all be in another World? How soon will every Soul be in an eternal State of Happiness or Misery?

If we think on these Things, and live accordingly, then may we have Comfort whilst here on Earth, and at the last Day, as our Saviour did on this, rise to Happiness both endless and unchangeable.

Which that we all may, GOD of his infinite Mercy grant, for JESUS CHRIST his Sake. Amen.

F I N I S.